

**MANISTEE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 9, 2020**  
**8:00 A.M., VIRTUAL MEETING**

PRESENT: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman (left meeting at 9:13 a.m.)

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Barry Lind

ALSO PRESENT: Stacie Bytwork, Marc Miller, Kristina Bajtko, Kittie Tuinstra – Executive Director, Oceana County Housing Commission Non-Profit Corporation, Allen Martin – Development Consultant, Kendra Thompson – Kendra C. Thompson Architects, P.C.

1.) **CALL TO ORDER.**

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 8:00 a.m.

2.) **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.**

*MOTION* by Karen Goodman, second by Thad Taylor to adopt the agenda as amended to include Resignation from DDA Board under New Business, c.  
With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman

No: None

3.) **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

None

4.) **PRESENTATION ON RIVER WATER HOUSING PROJECT.** Kittie Tuinstra – Executive Director, Oceana County Housing Commission Non-Profit Corporation, along with Allen Martin and architect Kendra Thompson, presented the proposed senior housing development for property on Water Street and River Street. The proposed River Water Development is to include “The Livery” at 443 Water Street, former Amor Sign site, and “The Dairy” at 451 & 457 River Street, former Jones building. The development summary included the need for affordable senior housing, alignment with the City’s

Master Plan, properties are Redevelopment Ready Communities sites, review of plans and designs for 49 apartment style units, and PILOT impact.

**Discussion included:**

- Housing will be for seniors age 55+.
- Amenities.
- Use of green energy products.
- Property management staff on site.
- MSHDA vs Section 8 housing.
- Timeline.
- Next steps include meeting with the Planning Commission for site plan review, meeting with DDA for input, and further PILOT discussion with Council.

5.) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES.**

*MOTION* by Kenneth Urban, second by Tamara DePonio to approve the minutes from the November 18, 2020 regular meeting.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman

No: None

6.) **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS.**

*MOTION* by James Beaudrie, second by Thad Taylor to approve the November financials.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman

No: None

7.) **COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

a. Design – none

b. Business Development – Marc Miller

**Discussion included:**

- Entrepreneurial Day schedule for March 2021, agenda being created.
- Spark Event.

- Reached out to last year's winner of Spark – still waiting on COVID-19 to break.
- Madelyn Fitzsimmons, owner of Millennial Décor located at 345 River Street, asked to sit on the Business Development Committee. Chair Mosher asked for the appointment based on Marc Miller's recommendation.

*MOTION* by James Beaudrie, second by Thad Taylor to approve the appointment of Madelyn Fitzsimmons, owner of Millennial Décor, at Marc Miller's recommendation, to the Business Development Committee.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman

No: None

- Northern Hotel property at 141-149 Washington Street is back up for sale – development opportunity, deemed obsolete by assessor.
- Top RRC sites are under development – will submit 6 more sites at the RRC meeting in January.
- Conversations are being had with several new business owners for downtown locations.

c. Gateway Development Ad-Hoc – Marc Miller

**Discussion included:**

- DDA's roll in support of the Gateway Project.
- Participated in four formal meetings.
- Alteration to plan is in the works – more to come.
- Brownfield Plan in the works – DDA needs to show strong leadership to encourage moving forward – next step is State review.

8.) **DIRECTOR'S REPORTS** – Stacie Bytwork.

Finalizing audit. Design Committee – setting meeting dates and trying to add to committee.

a. Merchant's Report – Kristina Bajtka

Attending Merchant Meetings every two weeks – last meeting of the year will be December 22. Port City Emporium just opened on River Street last week. Downtown has been receiving lots of attention through the media recently – four News Advocate articles and four 9&10 News segments.

b. Economic Development – Marc Miller

Fricano's on the Manistee River will be the official name of the restaurant at 440 River Street. OPRA has been deemed complete for that location by the State and will go to the Tax Commission on December 15 for review.

9.) **OLD BUSINESS.**

a. Approval of Draft Financial Statement and Representation Letter – Stacie Bytwork

*MOTION* by Thad Taylor, second by James Beaudrie to approve the draft financial statements and representation letter for the Audit.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 8 to 0.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban, Karen Goodman

No: None

b. Laskey Sculpture – Marc Miller

**Discussion included:**

- WSCC, Mayor Pro-Tem Symanski, and Chamber engaging in placement conversation.
- Legal issues surrounding community public art.
- Hoping to have art placed by Mr. Laskey’s 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration in July 2021.

c. DDA Development Plan – Thad Taylor

**Discussion included:**

- Special meeting to decide how to implement plan.
- Marc Miller to schedule.
- Staff to email plan to members.

d. Downtown Dollars – Kristina Bajtka

**Discussion included:**

- Discussed with Merchants at the 11/24 merchant meeting.
- Accessibility has been an issue in the past.
- Buying has dropped off – poorly promoted and supported.
- Countywide program would offer more options.
- Will poll merchants – consensus from them and make the decision based on that.
- How important is this issue? Move forward one way or the other.

e. DDA Strategic Planning Session – Stacie Bytwork

**Consensus:** forgo Strategic Planning Session this year – focusing on the DDA Development Plan. The DDA Development Plan will drive future strategic planning.

10.) **NEW BUSINESS.**

a. Approval of DDA 2021 Board Meeting Schedule.

**Discussion included:**

- Time change

*MOTION* by Thad Taylor, second by Bruce Allen to accept the DDA 2021 Board Meeting Schedule with the change to 8:30 a.m. meetings.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 7 to 0.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban

No: None

b. Lighting and Streetscape on Maple Street to Ramsdell Theater.

**Consensus:** Discuss during DDA Development Plan meeting.

c. Resignation: Barry Lind submitted resignation from DDA Board effective immediately.

*MOTION* by Thad Taylor, second by Bruce Allen to formally accept, with regret, Barry Lind's resignation from the DDA Board.

With Roll Call vote this motion passed 7 to 0.

Yes: Tamara DePonio, Kyle Mosher, Thad Taylor, Jodi Walter, James Beaudrie, Bruce Allen, Kenneth Urban

No: None

Chair Mosher thanked Barry Lind for his service of over 10 years to the DDA Board, for his contributions, and all he has brought to the Board.

11. **PUBLIC COMMENT.**

Madelyn Fitzsimmons, Millennial Décor, 345 River Street – Questioned the age limitations for the River Water Housing Project. Kendra Thompson clarified it was a 55+ development.

12. **BOARD COMMENT.**

Kenneth Urban – Board should consider a *set aside* for large developments and require public art as part of their projects.

Chair Mosher – Thanked the Chamber team for the amount of work they do – not only for the DDA but the community at large. Noted that things are *smoothing out* as DDA and Chamber continue to work together.

13. **ADJOURN.**

Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 8:30 a.m. location TBD.

*MOTION* by Thad Taylor, second by James Beaudrie **to adjourn at 9:31 a.m.**

Kelly McColl  
Acting Recording Secretary